

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic

and/or common Nancarles

## 2. Location

street & number 2301 Nancarles Drive not for publicationcity, town Gambrills X vicinity of congressional district

state Maryland 21054 county Anne Arundel

## 3. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>	
<u>X</u> district	<u>public</u>	<u>X</u> occupied	<u>agriculture</u>	<u>museum</u>
<u>X</u> building(s)	<u>X</u> private	<u>unoccupied</u>	<u>commercial</u>	<u>park</u>
<u>structure</u>	<u>both</u>	<u>work in progress</u>	<u>educational</u>	<u>X</u> private residence
<u>site</u>	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<u>entertainment</u>	<u>religious</u>
<u>object</u>	<u>in process</u>	<u>yes: restricted</u>	<u>government</u>	<u>scientific</u>
	<u>being considered</u>	<u>yes: unrestricted</u>	<u>industrial</u>	<u>transportation</u>
	<u>X</u> not applicable	<u>X</u> no	<u>military</u>	<u>other:</u>

## 4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Darrell R. and Peggy S. Johnson

street &amp; number 2301 Nancarles Drive telephone no.: 301-858-1932

city, town Gambrills state and zip code Maryland 21054

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Anne Arundel County Courthouse liber #4318

street &amp; number Church Circle folio #476

city, town Annapolis state Maryland

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title None

date    federal    state    county    local

depository for survey records

city, town state

## 7. Description

Survey No. AA-260

### Condition

☒ excellent  
☐ good  
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated  
☐ ruins  
☐ unexposed

### Check one

☒ unaltered  
☐ altered

### Check one

☒ original site  
☐ moved      date of move \_\_\_\_\_

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Nancarles is a two-story, central passage, double parlor plan frame dwelling with a one-story rear ell wing. Built in 1936, it is an excellent example of the Colonial Revival or Neoclassical style of architecture. Situated on a hill overlooking a small tributary of the Patuxent River, Nancarles faces north towards Defense Highway (Route 450).

#### Exterior:

The exterior walls are covered with wide beaded-board flush siding. Both the main block and the ell have gable roofs which are covered with asphalt shingles. The most distinguishing characteristic on the exterior is the large two-story pedimented porch which covers the central three bays of the five bay facade (north elevation). The porch is supported by four columns of the Tuscan Order. A small oval window pierces the center of the pediment. Under the porch is the principal entrance into the house. Located in the central bay, it is composed of a molded eight-panel door surmounted by an elliptical fanlight with tracery. The door is flanked by narrow sidelights, with tracery, over molded panels.

At the rear of the ell, on the south elevation, is an oriel window with a copper roof. The rear of the house is further embellished with an arched double-sash window at the second-story of the main block.

All windows are 6/6 double-sash with wooden shutters. Two small arched windows pierce the gable ends of the main block at the attic level. A pitched-roof dormer window is located on the rear slope (south) of the main block gable roof.

A brick chimney is located where the main block meets the ell. The dwelling rests on a concrete block foundation. There is a full basement, part of which is a garage.

A small frame house, built in 1936 as a child's playhouse, is situated northwest of the dwelling, overlooking the creek. The one-room "cottage" is covered with weatherboard siding and has a gable roof covered with asphalt shingles. A full porch covers the facade which faces north. A large exterior chimney, built of the local reddish-brown sandstone, fills the east gable end.

The playhouse was built for Lester Kirchner's daughter, Nancy Carol, when they moved from Washington to Nancarles.

## 8. Significance

Survey No. AA-260

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1936 **Builder/Architect** Dana Berry Johannes, Jr.

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D  
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

Nancarles, built in 1936, is a Colonial Revival or Neoclassical dwelling, displaying elements of the Federal and Greek Revival architectural styles. It is beautifully situated on six wooded acres in western Anne Arundel County. Commanding a hill overlooking an unnamed branch of the Patuxent River, Nancarles is surrounded by landscaped grounds of over 17 different ornamental and unusual species of trees planted among over 1200 azaleas.

Built for Lester F. Kirchner, a Washington, D.C. builder, Nancarles was named for the three members of the Kirchner family: Nancy (wife of Lester Kirchner), Carol (actually Nancy Carol, daughter of Lester and Nancy Kirchner), and Lester (Mr. Kirchner). Lester Kirchner, a sixth generation native of Washington, D.C., operated lumber and milling companies in the Baltimore-Washington area. Among them were Colonial Builders, Inc. at 927 15th Street, N.W., in Washington, D.C., from 1935 to 1941 and the Langdon Mill Lumber Company from 1928 to 1937.<sup>1</sup>

Nancarles was designed in the Neoclassical style, which was very popular in the 1930s, by Dana Berry Johannes, Jr., a young architect and close friend of Kirchner. According to Kirchner family members, Nancy Kirchner provided a great deal of input into the design of the house.

Dana Johannes began his career in 1928 as a draftsman and detailer for millwork firms in the Washington metropolitan area. He was working for Kirchner by 1935 when he prepared the measured drawings for Nancarles. In 1945, Johannes became a partner in the firm of Johannes and Murray & Associates of Silver Spring, Maryland. Johannes specialized in the design of schools, some 200 during his career. Many of these received local and national awards and citations. Some of the firm's projects included the Charles W. Woodward, Albert Einstein, and Springbrook High Schools in Montgomery County, as well as buildings at the University of Maryland and on military installations, and numerous churches.<sup>2</sup>

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. AA-260

(See Footnotes)

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 6 acresQuadrangle name Bowie

Quadrangle scale \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A 

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Zone Easting NorthingB 

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Zone Easting NorthingC 

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D 

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E 

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F 

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G 

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H 

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Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Donna Ware, Historic Sites Plannerorganization Anne Arundel County Office of Planning  
and Zoningdate March 1988street & number Arundel Centertelephone 301-280-1270city or town Annapolisstate Maryland 21401

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
Shaw House  
21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 269-2438

**HISTORIC CONTEXT:**

**MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA**

**Geographic Organization:** Western Shore

**Chronological/Developmental Period(s):** Modern Period

**Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s):** Architecture

**Resource Type:**

**Category (see Section 3 of survey form):** Building

**Historic Environment (urban, suburban, village, or rural):**  
Rural

**Historic Function(s) and Use(s):** Private Residence

**Known Design Source (write none if unknown):**

Dana Berry Johannes, Jr., architect

Interior:

The interior of Nancarrow is distinguished by its rich and excellently crafted wood paneling and finishings. The principal entrance on the north elevation opens into the central passage which contains the stair to the second floor. The passage and staircase are embellished with wainscoting which is composed of fully-fielded panels with an ogee molding. The stair curves slightly out into the hall and has ornate squared balusters and newel post.

All four first floor rooms in the main block open into the stair hall. The dining room, in the northwest corner, is finished with light walnut wainscoting. An exquisite built-in corner cupboard in the Chippendale style fills the southwest corner of the room.

The study or the northeast room is fully paneled in gumwood.

The most outstanding room is the living room or "great room." This room completely fills the wing in floor space as well as height. The ceiling is pitched, rising to its full story-and-a-half height. The walls and ceiling are paneled with chestnut. The fully-fielded panels with ogee molding give the room a sense of greater dimension and elegance. The chimney piece is also chestnut and is composed of a mantel with fluted side panels which support an ogee molded shelf. The shelf supports the overmantel composed of two fluted pilasters which rise to the cornice and flank nine molded panels. Opposite the chimney piece is the oriel window.

The second floor contains bedrooms and bathrooms which are finished with more subdued trim.

Setting

One cannot imagine Nancarrow without its picturesque setting. Most of the six acres consists of natural woodland. Careful landscaping, immediately surrounding the dwelling, was designed to follow the natural rolling terrain. It blends beautifully with the natural woodland areas.

Mrs. Kirchner initiated the landscaping scheme; however, most of it was planted by Mrs. Kirchner's second husband, Dr. Gustav Wiebe, a well-known agronomist. The plantings consist of many ornamental and exotic trees interspersed among numerous dogwood trees and over 1200 azalea bushes.

A gravel and dirt driveway encircles the dwelling, providing the opportunity to appreciate the landscaping. For those on foot, slate pathways lined with the local reddish sandstone meander through the grounds. The sandstone was salvaged by Mrs. Kirchner

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
STATE HISTORIC SITES INVENTORY FORM

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Description (continued)

Section 7 Page 3

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from the foundation of an alleged 18th century dwelling which stood southwest of Nancarles. Only the foundation was visible when the Kirchners built Nancarles.

At the foot of the hill on which Nancarles stands is a large fish pond surrounded by dogwoods. Steps lead from the front of the house, down the hill, to reach the fish pond. East of the house is a "deer park" or glen which offers garden seats for thoughtful contemplation.

Nancarles represents one of Johannes' earliest achievements. It also exemplifies the philosophy of domestic design in the 1930s. The Neoclassical movement in architectural design reached its height during the 1930s in the midst of the rise of modernism. Generally labelled the "Colonial Revival" movement, it transcended the strict adherence to just the Colonial period of architecture, drawing from the post-colonial styles of Federal and Greek Revival. Buildings incorporated elements of the originals, but usually did not imitate them outright. They conveyed "a feeling of historic accuracy," while "realizing the functional needs of the time." There are many reasons for the success of the Colonial Revival style in the 1930s. Architectural historians attribute it to the widespread appeal for traditionalism, the inward searching for nationalism, and the value placed on the family unit.<sup>3</sup>

Lester Kirchner's selection of the name "Colonial Builders Inc." for his company, suggests that he intended to capitalize on this appeal for Colonial-Revival or Neoclassical architecture. If Nancarles, which displays excellent design and craftsmanship, can be used as an example of the company's typical product, Colonial Builders' must have been known for their high quality work.

#### Background History of Property

In colonial times, the property on which Nancarles is located was one of several tracts owned by the Hopkins, a prominent Maryland family. This particular tract was composed of various tracts including parts of "Ropers Range," "Snowden's Reputation Supported," and several minor tracts equalling 1,239.99 acres.

In 1786, Philip Hammond Hopkins inherited 1000 acres of this tract from his father, Gerrard Hopkins IV. Philip, a bachelor, added approximately 240 acres to the original 1000 acres during his lifetime. At his death in 1845, he bequeathed his South River land to his nephew, Rezin H. Snowden.<sup>4</sup>

During the Snowden ownership, the property was tenant farmed, producing tobacco and corn. At Rezin Snowden's death in 1866, his descendants continued the tenant farming operation until 1927, when it was sold to John W. Welch, a Washington D.C. businessman. Welch immediately conveyed it to South River Farms, Inc., a company he had formed to develop the property. Ten days after this transaction, Welch died. The property, for which Welch had paid \$30,000.00, had a \$20,000.00 mortgage. At his death neither Welch nor his company had sufficient funds to pay the mortgage. Through special arrangements made by the Snowden descendants, the company was able to pay the mortgage.<sup>5</sup>

In 1935, South River Farms, Inc. conveyed five acres to Lester and Nancy Kirchner. The Kirchner's acquired additional acreage surrounding Nancarles in 1939 and 1948. At the time of

Lester Kirchner's death in 1963, they owned approximately 43 acres. Apparently, South River Farms, Inc. never developed the remaining property since it remains largely undeveloped today. In 1983, Darrell and Peggy Johnson, the present owners of Nancarrow, purchased six acres, including the dwelling, from Nancy Carol Eliason, the Kirchner's daughter.

FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>This information was obtained from three sources: Peggy Johnson, the present owner; Nancy Carol Eliason, the daughter of Lester Kirchner; and Kirchner's obituary in The Sun, September 10, 1963, p. 19.

<sup>2</sup>American Institute for Architects (AIA) membership files RG803, Box 105, Folder 4, AIA Library, Washington, D.C.

<sup>3</sup>David Gebhard, "The American Colonial Revival in the 1930s," Winterthur Portfolio, Vol. 22, Numbers 2/3, Summer/Autumn 1987, pp. 109-148.

<sup>4</sup>Joseph L. Browne, From Sotweed to Suburbia: A History of the Crofton, Maryland Area, 1660-1960, (Baltimore: Gateway Press, Inc., 1985), p. 156.

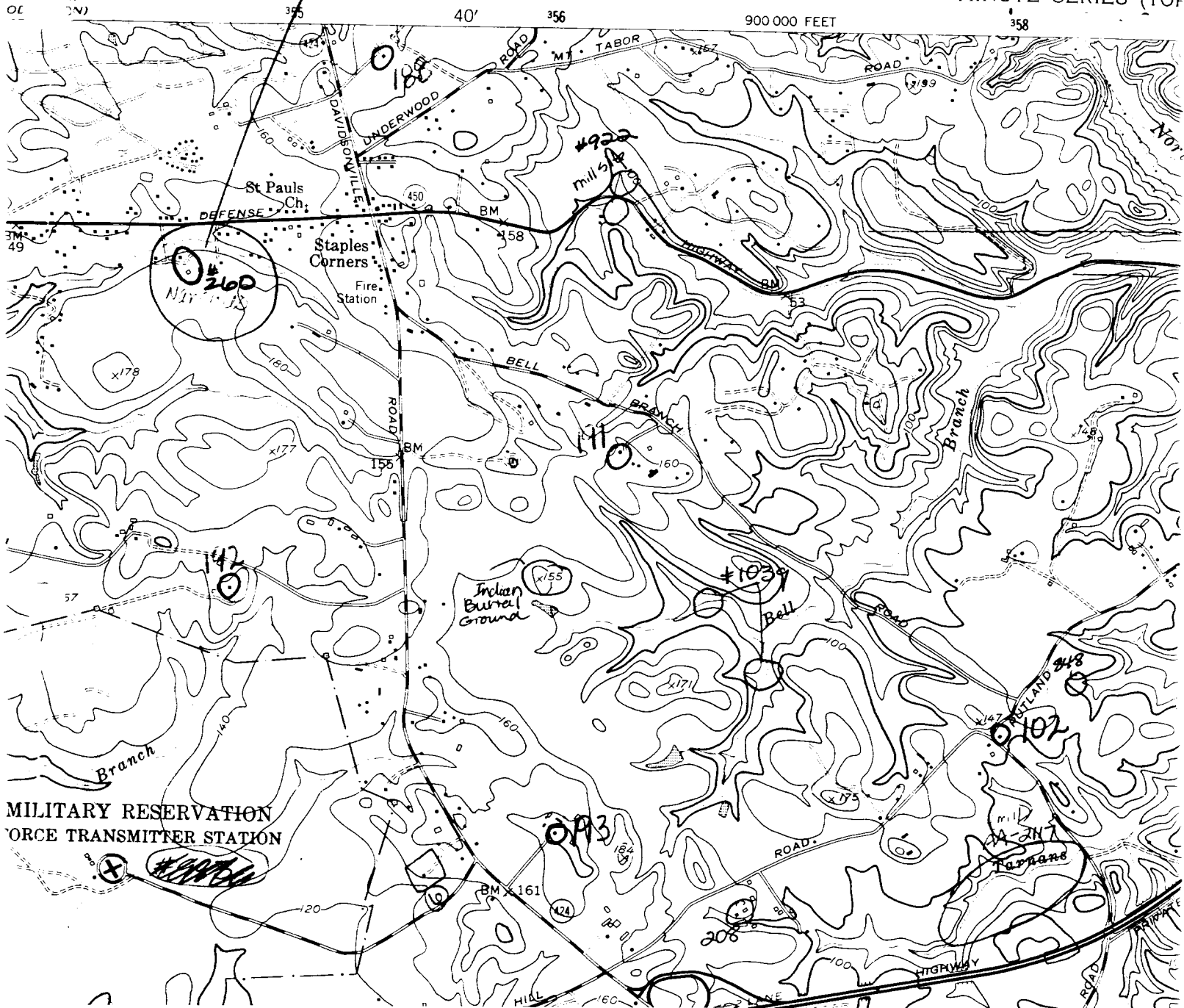
<sup>5</sup>Anne Arundel County Equity Records #5258 (1927).

<sup>6</sup>Anne Arundel County Land Records, Liber FAM 138 folio 434; Liber 3432 folio 533; and Liber 4318 folio 476.

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
ENGINEERS

BOWIE QUADRANGLE  
MARYLAND

7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOP)



Bowie, MD (formerly Davidsonville)  
USGS 715 Minute Series  
Scale: 1:24,000  
1957: Photorevised 1978

AA-260  
Nancarrow  
2301 Nancarrow Drive  
Gambrills, MD  
Anne Arundel County, MD



AA 260

Norwalk

Anne Arundel County MD

Down Lane

Oct 1987

MD SIIPO

Extensive. N. elevation

12 10



AA 260

Nash Mills

Anne Arundel County, MD

Donna Ware

Oct '87

MD SAPO

Exterior: S Elevation

29 10



AA-260

Nancarrow

Anne Arundel County, MD

Donna Wane

DET '81

MD SAPO

Exterior: E Devotion

3810



AA-260

Narrables

Anne Arundel County, Md

Donna Ware

Oct '87

Mr. JAPC

Exterior: front door, N. Elevator

4 g 10



AA-260

Nauvoo

Anne Arundel County MD

Danna Ware

Oct '87

MTD SAPO

Interior: Central Hall, looking N

5 8 10



AA 260

Namurles

Anne Arundel County, MD

Donna White

Oct '87

MD SAPO

Interior: Newell past - Central hall  
looking S

6 3 10



AA 260

Nancarrow

Anne Arundel County, MD

Donna Ward

Oct '87

MD SAPO

Interior: great room, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, SE corner  
looking N, at fireplace

7810



AA-260

Navacalles

Dune Arundel County MD

Donna Ware

Oct '87

MD SHPO

Interior: NW Room, 1<sup>st</sup> floor corner  
cupboard, looking SW

8810



AA-266

Naxos carles

Anne Arundel County, MD

Dorinda Ware

Oct '81

MD SAPO

Extension: playhouse, w. elevator

9910



AA-260

Nanuetles

Anne Arundel County, MD

Donna Ware

Oct '87

MD SHPO

Exterior: playhouse, E elevation  
looking W

10 8 10